

MILTON STIEFEL

Presents

Kay Francis

in

“The Last of Mrs. Cheyney”

by

Frederick Lonsdale

with

Joel Ashley

Staged by Mr. Stiefel

Production Designed by Don Finlayson

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—CAST OF CHARACTERS—

In the Order of their Appearance

Charles.....	Stiano Braggiotti
George.....	George Spelvin
Jim.....	Lonny Chapman
Lady Joan Houghton.....	Joan Croydon
Willie Wynton.....	Leonard Lord
Lady Mary Sindley.....	Sylvia Bragg

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Lord Elton.....	William Jackson



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THE IVORYTON PLAYHOUSE

(NOTE: Last week we began a history of the Ivoryton Playhouse, and we continue our story this week. The theatre first opened its doors to summer theatre patrons in 1930; and, like all pioneer ventures, its early years were filled with interesting uncertainties . . .)

But by the end of the third season in 1932, there was little doubt that the idea of theatre in the country during the summer months had merit. More and more people came over to the little community of Ivoryton to see what this "Summer Theatre" idea was like. With the increased attendance and the mounting interest on the part of the theatre going public, professional theatre people began to accept the possibilities of summer try-outs for proposed Broadway plays.

The Ivoryton Playhouse was a pioneer in this facet of summer theatre's development, too. As a matter of fact, during the very first season in 1930, Ivoryton saw the world premier of "THE LITTLE CHURCHMOUSE," which was to be seen later on Broadway with Ruth Gordon and Bert Lytell in the leading roles.

Another *Ivoryton first* was a production of "OCTOGEN SQUARE" which was adapted by John Golden and starred SAM JAFFEE. No story of the Ivoryton "try-outs" would be complete without mentioning the highly successful revue "HEAVEN HELP THE ANGLES." Last summer Paul and Grace HARTMAN brought their happy little revue to Ivoryton, and the response of the "laughing Ivoryton audience" . . . which is the way THE HARTMANS refer to the Ivoryton patrons . . . so encouraged all concerned that the revue was produced in New York last fall and became one of the hits of the current season. It is now called "ANGEL IN THE WINGS," but it is the same revue you Ivoryton audiences enjoyed last summer.

If plays moved from summer tryouts to Broadway, it followed that Broadway hits should move directly out to summer theatres from their New York runs. One of the most interesting anecdotes in connection with this development in the history of summer theatre came about when Milton Stiefel announced in the middle of one week that his next attraction would be the highly successful American comedy "AH! WILDERNESS" by Eugene O'Neil. The story behind this sudden turn events was this: Warren Munsell, who was general manager for the Theatre Guild, had promised Mr. Stiefel that Ivoryton would have the play as soon as it had completed its New York run. So . . . one Wednesday morning Mr. Munsell called Mr. Stiefel to tell him that "AH!

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CAST OF CHARACTERS (Continued)

Mrs. Cheyney	KAY FRANCIS
Mrs. Ebley	Gertrude Dallas
Roberts	Robert Matheo

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THE IVORYTON PLAYHOUSE

(Continued from Page 6)

WILDERNESS" was to close in New York that week, and to ask when Mr. Stiefel would like to present it at Ivoryton. When Mr. Stiefel replied that it would be presented the very next week, Mr. Munsell wondered just what kind of miracle-worker he was dealing with. How Milton did it is one of those stories that theatre people like to tell. He took the script to SETH ARNOLD who was at that moment in rehearsal for "PAGE MISS GLORY" for opening the following Monday. Stiefel asked Arnold if he thought he could learn the leading role in "AH! WILDERNESS" by the following Monday. Mr. Arnold said he could. LEON JANNEY and BETTY FIELD came from New York to play the boy and the "bad woman" respectively. Rehearsals were underway on Thursday and they were the kind of intensive, exciting rehearsals that make "THE Theatre" the fascinating business that it is. The opening four days later of O'Neil's "AH! WILDERNESS" was one that the old timers are still talking about. It was a truly electric performance and the audience shared the excitement of the moment with the actors. Although Milton Stiefel will not say what is his favorite production of all

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— SCENES —

ACT ONE

Drawing-room in Mrs. Cheyney's house at Goring, England

ACT TWO

Scene 1: A room in Mrs. Ebley's country home

Scene 2: Mrs. Ebley's bedroom

ACT THREE

A room in Mrs. Ebley's country home

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THE IVORYTON PLAYHOUSE

(Continued from Page 8)

those he has done at Ivoryton, there is a very revealing light in his eye when he speaks of this one.

Along the walls at Ivoryton Playhouse are pictures of many stars who have played in this pioneer summer theatre. If you read the inscriptions on those pictures, you will observe that many of the most famous names refer to the *start* the playhouse gave them. And it is perfectly true that many theatre personalities have followed KATHERINE HEPBURN through the doors of Ivoryton to fame in the theatre. The list of those names grows very long when you look back over the old programs, but you can not miss CELESTE HOLME, WILLARD PARKER, CORNEL WILDE, PENNY SINGLETON, ROSE MARIE DE CAMP, BUDDY EBSEN, HAILA STODDARD . . . and many others who were just "Part of the company" when they were around the famous stage at Ivoryton.

As Ivoryton approaches its twentieth anniversary, Summer Theatre moves into the status of a full-fledged theatrical industry. This summer, for instance, more actors will be employed in summer theatres than in any branch of the theatre. No longer is it a "quaint idea." No longer is it a play thing of actors who like to spend their summers in the country. It is now BIG BUSINESS. The Ivoryton Playhouse and its management is proud, indeed, of the part it has played in making summer theatre what it is today. Ivoryton is grateful to its loyal patrons who have made that part possible.

The next chapter in this history is yet to be written. With Summer Theatre the growing industry it is, there are those who wonder what the next chapter will bring . . .

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